

CS/00

Nov 2 6 13 PM '70

CONFIDENTIAL

October 30, 1970

TALKING POINTS PAPER FOR MEETING
WITH SENATOR CASE ON
RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY

In letters to Secretary Rogers (October 8, 1970) and to Mr. Shakespeare, Director of USIA (October 15, 1970), Senator Case raised several questions with regard to Radio Free Europe (RFE) and Radio Liberty (RL). Points to be used in replying are listed after each question below.

1) Is the U.S. Government involved in either RFE or RL?

Answer: Yes. It has been alleged in the press for several years that both RFE and RL receive financial assistance from the U.S. Government, but this has not been officially confirmed in a public statement. The existence of such support was the topic of press speculation in 1967 in connection with the Katzenbach Committee investigation of government and private support to certain private organizations. At one point in 1967, it was planned to acknowledge publicly that RFE and RL were the only two organizations covered by the statement of policy in the Katzenbach Report which would continue to be subsidized in substantially the same way after December 31, 1967, but that was not done. Early in 1969 the present Administration, after careful study, concluded that the Radios are not among the nation's "private voluntary organizations" and hence are not in fact subject to the policy recommendations implemented subsequent to the Katzenbach Committee report.

(The Katzenbach Committee recommended that it should be the "policy of the United States Government that no federal agency shall provide any covert financial assistance or support, direct or indirect, to any of the nation's educational or private voluntary organizations.")

Consequently, RFE and RL continue to receive support from the US Government.

There are several reasons for concluding that RFE and RL are not, in fact, "private voluntary organizations." The United States Government was instrumental in establishing the organizations in the first place. Most of their funds do come from the USG and their overall policy framework, and guidance for their broadcasts, is determined by the USG. The purpose of the Katzenbach Committee recommendations was to protect the independence of legitimate private voluntary organizations. Because RFE and RL are in fact neither private nor voluntary, they were removed from the application of the Katzenbach formulation. On the other hand, what the Radios actually do is exactly what they say they do, and that is well known: they operate as commercial radio stations broadcasting internationally. But because the funds for RFE and RL are supplied covertly, their link with the USG must be kept secret. their effective-ness internationally would be jeopardized if the USG should publicly acknowledge parentage.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

-2-

2) Could the Voice of America (VOA) assume the functions of either RFE or RL? The letter to Mr. Shakespeare asked: "Could USIA (VOA) assume RFE's functions? If so, how large an increase in USIA's Congressional appropriations would be necessary? How large an increase in personnel, etc.?" "Do VOA broadcasts differ markedly from RFE's or RL's in editorial content or emphasis?"

Answer: No, to first question; yes, to last question. The purpose and functions of RFE and RL are quite different from those of VOA. There is no over-lap or conflict among them and VOA, for both practical and policy reasons, is not in a position to assume the functions of RFE and RL. VOA broadcasts to the whole world with emphasis on developments of particular concern to the United States - it is the official voice of the U.S. Government. The broadcasts of RFE are beamed to the countries of Eastern Europe in 6 languages and those of RL are focussed on the Soviet Union in 18 languages. The massive Soviet and Bloc jamming efforts against RL and RFE (and also against VOA) attest to the effectiveness of their broadcasts and their contribution to U.S. foreign policy aims.

NOTE: The distinction between RFE and RL on the one hand and VOA on the other is perhaps most clearly illustrated by the fact that when VOA says "we" it means "we Americans" while when RFE and RL say "we" they mean "we Poles", "we Czechs", "we Russians", etc.

Radio Free Europe

RFE is, in many respects, a unique instrumentality. While other Western broadcasters to Eastern Europe are mandated primarily to present the life of the country and political viewpoint of the government sponsoring the service, RFE provides special commentary on East European internal developments and international events which would otherwise not be available. The Station offers a virtually full-time alternative to communist-controlled media by broadcasting 19 hours a day to Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary, 12 hours to Romania and 8 to Bulgaria. There is massive evidence of its effectiveness; it is reliably estimated that over thirty million people, over one-half of the adult population of the five countries to which it broadcasts, listen regularly to its programs.

The unique element of RFE broadcasts -- detailed reporting and comment on internal developments -- could not be duplicated by VOA without substantial changes in VOA operating principles and the risk of unacceptable diplomatic consequences. Moreover, VOA could not realistically be expected, partly but not wholly for budgetary reasons, to maintain the massive news-gathering and research operations on which the programming done by RFE depends.

Radio Liberty

The purposes and the functions of RL are quite different and distinct from those of VOA. VOA is the official voice of the U.S. Government and as an official broadcaster is severely limited in its capability to comment in

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

-3-

depth on the internal affairs of the Soviet Union. It is manifestly awkward for the voice of one government to speak to those who are in opposition to another government with which it maintains official ties. On the other hand, RL, as a private broadcaster for seventeen years, has created a viable image of itself to the Soviet audience as a "home radio service" which speaks the truth by remedying the omissions and correcting the distortions of the Soviet domestic information media. Thus RL serves the interests of those people who are denied free speech and free access to information inside the USSR, approaching and treating the world scene and internal USSR events in a manner that has most meaning for them. To accomplish its mission, RL broadcasts in 18 different languages from three transmitter sites for a daily total of 294 broadcast hours over 35 different frequencies.

Additional practical reasons why VOA could not assume the functions of RFE and RL are that the latter broadcast to Eastern Europe and the USSR in more languages for many more hours a day and on more frequencies than VOA. 25X1

The personnel operating the Radios come from many countries, but most of them are originally from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Together, the Radios employ some 2,600 people (about 300 in New York); less than 300 Americans are employed overseas and many of them are emigres who have acquired U.S. citizenship. The combined annual budget of RFE and RL runs to [redacted] per year. Altogether [redacted] have been invested in them since they were started some 20 years ago. 25X1

3) Are any U.S. Foreign Policy aims served by either RFE or RL? The letter to Mr. Shakespeare asks: "Do RFE and RL contribute to meeting USIA's objectives?"

Answer: Yes. Radio Stations which continually make known to the communist world developments and views of importance to Western Europe, the Atlantic community and the non-communist world in general are assets of very great value. RFE and RL broadcasts make a significant contribution to U.S. objectives in Eastern Europe and the USSR by promoting and encouraging internal pressures for reform and for the attenuation of Soviet influence and control. The primary purpose of the Radios is to encourage an evolution in attitudes within the USSR and other communist countries. Experience has shown that they help to influence the attitudes of the peoples and leaders of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in directions which should make their Governments more constructive and responsible members of the world community. Broadcasts by the emigres working for RFE and RL help to overcome resistance to change in those countries by stimulating dissatisfaction with existing policies and conditions. The existence of voices speaking from abroad provides moral support and information to those Soviets who have the courage to voice their convictions openly in the USSR. Thus the Radios provide encouragement to intellectuals in their struggle for personal freedom against the Soviet regime. For example: currently, great emphasis is being placed on the award of the Nobel prize for literature to the Soviet author Solzhenitsyn. It would be most unfortunate, and detrimental to U.S. interests, if these radio

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

-4-

voices were not available to stress such significant developments. They are important adjuncts to U.S. foreign policy as they continue to broadcast facts and analysis in support of popular aspirations in the USSR and Eastern Europe for a more open, freer, and humane society.

4) Do broadcasts by either RFE or RL hurt the possibilities for better relations with the countries of Eastern Europe?

Answer: No. The operations of RFE and RL have not been an issue in the bilateral relations of the United States with the countries of Eastern Europe. On the other hand, there has been a wide-ranging, intensive Communist effort to discredit the Radios and secure their discontinuation. Some protests on specific broadcasts have been made to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] which, however, continues to believe in the right of free expression on radio-waves and has continued to extend the licenses for the operation of these Radio Stations. Better relations between countries are a two-way proposition. Occasional communist objections to some of the broadcasts by RFE and RL are an indication of their success and a reminder of the need to co-exist and cooperate in international relations.

We believe that the closure of the Radios would not bring about an improvement in the relations between the United States and the countries of Eastern Europe and the USSR. Such improved relations are dependent primarily upon the realities of international politics and competing ideologies; a mutual give-and-take in the settlement of a wide variety of bilateral problems is the essential requirement. Moreover, if RFE and RL should be dispersed they could be recreated only with immense difficulty and cost, if at all.

5) Is either RFE or RL scheduled for budget reductions or termination?

Answer: No. Neither RFE nor RL is scheduled for termination. Like other agencies or elements of the U.S. Government, they have been and are subject to budgetary reductions. Each year since 1965 there have been modest reductions in the number of employees. However, inflation in the United States [REDACTED] during the past five years, plus the revaluation of [REDACTED] have prevented corresponding budgetary reductions.

CONFIDENTIAL